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CITY NEWS

The new perspective on city living

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Vol. 19, No. 24

March 12 - March 18, 2003

Newark Police Officials announce a new DWI enforcement initiative.

Last weekend marked the deployment of the Newark Police Department's newly created DWI Enforcement Team. Team members will be patrolling each of the four police districts searching for people driving while under the influence of alcohol.

Director Rankin stated, "The primary goal of the newly formed DWI Enforcement Team is to discourage drinking and driving. By getting out the message that the major portions of all crashes are alcohol related, and that motor vehicle accidents are the leading cause of death in the United States for persons between the ages of one and thirty-four we hope to discourage individuals from drinking and driving."

While the Department diligently enforces all traffic laws, the grant pays for the officers assigned to the DWI Enforcement Team. Since the enforcement team will be deployed on an overtime basis, their numbers will compliment other enforcement efforts and initiatives. Whenever an officer stops a person driving under the influence the assignment will be handled by one of the Enforcement Team members enabling the original officer to respond to another assignment, stated Rankin.

According to the National Traffic and Safety Administration more than a half million people are injured in alcohol-related crashes nationwide and that every 30 minutes, someone in this country dies in an alcohol related accident. In New Jersey, more than 40% of the traffic deaths were related to alcohol.

Chief Ambrose stated, "According to the National Highway and Traffic Safety Administration, 77% of fatal accidents occur between the hours of 12am to 3am. The Team's deployment hours will encompass these times."

Search for AIDS vaccine bypassing African-Americans

Special to the NNPA from the Black AIDS Institute

EDITOR'S NOTE: This is the last installment of the Drumbeat Project, an unprecedented collaboration to sound the alarm on the HIV/AIDS epidemic. Television, radio, magazines, newspapers and websites with a combined audience of more than 40 million are joining forces to highlight the fight against AIDS and the toll it is taking on the African-American community.

When Dr. J. Lawrence Miller talks with fellow African-Americans about the need for a vaccine to prevent HIV and slow the AIDS epidemic, he often starts by tackling what he calls "the Tuskegee mentality."

Miller, head of Baltimore's Black Educational AIDS Project and a former board member of the AIDS Vaccine Advocacy Coalition, isn't only referring to the Tuskegee study,

in which researchers withheld treatment from African-American men with syphilis from the 1930s to the '70s.

"Wherever there's a medical research institution, there's a Tuskegee-like story," he said, recounting common suspicions over real or perceived abuse of African-Americans by medical researchers. According to Miller and others fighting the AIDS epidemic in the Black community, distrust of medical research is one of several reasons that African-Americans have played a dangerously small role in HIV vaccine research.

But why should African-Americans care about HIV vaccines?

Steve Wakefield, associate director for community relations with the HIV Vaccine Trials Network, says he began to find his own answer in the 1980s, before the first vaccine trial had even begun. At that time people were talking about AIDS as an issue only for the



Dr. J. Lawrence Miller heads Baltimore's Black Educational AIDS Project.

"4H club,"—meaning homosexuals, hemophiliacs, Haitians and heroin users.

"Even then it seemed obvious that HIV was bigger than these categories," he said. "And it was also clear that if this disease was a problem affecting Black people, it was necessary for Black people to be involved in fighting it."



Steve Wakefield is associate director for community relations with the HIV Vaccine

Wakefield left his job as an executive at a Chicago soap manufacturer to volunteer at an HIV clinic, became a member of the city's board of health, and eventually ran an AIDS organization. From that early stage, he knew that more had to be done to get African-Americans directly involved in the fight

See AIDS on page 7

Bill examines African-American legacy in NJ for future reparations

(TRENTON) — An Assembly panel recently approved legislation Assemblymen Craig A. Stanley and Alfred E. Steele sponsored to examine ways of improving knowledge and understanding between African-Americans and other ethnicities in New Jersey.

The Stanley/Steele measure (A-3272) would establish a 27-member New Jersey African-American Reconciliation Study Commission.

"The full effects of the institution and legacy of slavery on African-Americans living in New Jersey and their communities have never been sufficiently examined," said Stanley (D-Essex). "Neither has there been formal acknowledgment of disenfranchisement, proposed remedies for past injustice and current harm, or sufficient efforts at reconciliation."

Stanley also is the sponsor of the Amistad commission which was signed into law last August. The commission's purpose is to promote wider imple-

mentation of educational and awareness programs regarding the African slave trade, slavery in America, and the considerable contributions African-Americans have made over the course of United States history.

The Assemblymen cite similar precedents set in the United States for reconciliation and remedies for past injustices that involved Native Americans, Japanese Americans, Jews, Filipino veterans, African-Americans who were victimized by the 1930s' syphilis experiments, and the Rosewood riots also have received compensation.

"We should realize the effects of slavery's dehumanization extends beyond textbook pictures of human beings bound in metal shackles around their neck, ankles and wrists," said Steele.

"This commission would examine socio-economic disparities in housing, education, and employment opportunities

See LEGACY on page 7

Assembly bill creates truancy task force

(TRENTON) — Addressing one of the top 10 problems facing New Jersey's schools, an Assembly panel today released legislation Assemblyman Craig A. Stanley (D-Essex) and Joseph V. Doria (D-Hudson) sponsored to streamline reporting methods of students with chronic school absences.

"Excessive absences from school are usually an indication that the student may have bigger problems in life," said Stanley, who is vice-chairman of the Assembly Education Committee. "This is a comprehensive task force that would be able to produce a holistic approach to help solve the pervasive problem of truancy in our schools."

The measure (AJR-57) would establish a task force to study current practices in reporting student attendance, including but not limited to absences, tardiness and procedures for addressing students with patterns unexcused absences, or excessive tardiness.

Currently, students who have 5 to 15 days of unexcused absences, excluding absence due to illness or suspension, are reported to various intervention programs or state authorities such as municipal or superior courts.

With daily absentee rates as high as 30 percent in some cities, the Assembly members said they are not at all surprised that truancy is rated among the major problems facing schools. The statewide average high school attendance rate was 92 percent in the 2000 -2001 school year.

"Absenteeism can be hinder a student's achievement, promotion, graduation, self-esteem, and employment potential," said Doria, who is chairman of the Assembly Education Committee.

"Before determining the most effective means of controlling unexcused absences, the causes of truant behavior must be understood. This is where the findings of the task force will be critical." See TRUANCY on page 5



Trevor H. Atherley, MD, Director of the Cardiac Telemetry Unit at Newark Beth Israel Medical Center will be the honored guest at the 2003 Dinner Dance sponsored by Newark Beth Israel's Auxiliary and Medical Staff. The event is Sunday, May 4, 2003 at The Newark Club, One Newark Center, Newark.

New Jersey Legal, Corporate leaders honored at Thurgood Marshall Dinner

New Jersey Legal and Corporate Leaders Honored At Thurgood Marshall Scholarship Fund Awards of Excellence Dinner March 20th

Newark, NJ, March 3, 2003 - The Honorable Peter C. Harvey, Acting New Jersey Attorney General and The Honorable Sharpe James, Mayor of the City of Newark, have been selected to receive the Award of Excellence from the Thurgood Marshall Scholarship Fund on March 20, 2003 at the National Newark Building, 744 Broad Street, Newark. In recognition of achieving excellence in their chosen fields and their community service efforts, Karol Corbin Walker, Esq., Partner at St. John & Wayne, L.L.C. and Joe J. Johnson, Corporate Development Officer at Mercedes-Benz USA, round out the group of New Jersey honorees.

The Awards of Excellence Dinner is part of a nationwide effort to educate the public about the Thurgood Marshall Scholarship Fund (TMSF), that uniquely supports students attending five law schools along with 45 Public Historically Black Colleges and Universities (HBCUs).

For more information about the Thurgood Marshall Scholarship Fund please visit www.thurgood-marshallfund.org.

Dinner Co-Chairs are attorneys Donald Robinson and Richard Thigpen. For ticket information, call 201-227-8427.



St. Mary's Celebrates Catholic Schools Week —

St. Mary of the Assumption HS celebrated this year Catholic Schools Week as it always has, by giving to the community. The frightful weather outside sparked the students of St. Mary's to collect dozens of warm gloves, hats and scarves that were then donated to a local homeless shelter. On Thursday January 30th students and faculty donated 25 pints of blood to The Blood Center of New Jersey. Further evidence that St. Mary's students are not only prepared for college, they are also prepared for life. The students of Union and Essex counties have been receiving quality Catholic education at St. Mary of the Assumption High School since 1930.



Nuts to the animals! — Judy LoveFischer, park naturalist at Trailside Nature and Science Center, Mountainside shows a child in her Nifty Nuts class how to tell that a squirrel had eaten a black walnut. The class is a part of Trailside's Small Fry Days dropoff program series for four and five year olds.

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National Briefs

HARVARD HONORS BISHOP FOR HIV/AIDS WORK IN AFRICA

(Special to the NNPA)-Bishop Charles E. Blake, pastor of the 20,000-member West Angeles Church of God in Christ in Los Angeles, has been awarded the Harvard Foundation Humanitarian Medal.

Harvard's divinity school, Memorial Church and the foundation honored Blake's work with Save Africa's Children, an international church-based effort to build and sustain orphanages for millions of Africa's AIDS-orphaned children and hospices for children with HIV/AIDS. The organization gives grants to faith-based and secular organizations directly supporting children orphaned or affected by HIV/AIDS in sub-Saharan Africa.

Blake believes the Pan African Children's Fund is essential to mobilizing a response to the AIDS epidemic.

"We need to do much more," said Blake. "We need to promote broad-scale African-American awareness of the plight of our brothers and sisters in Africa."

Seventeen million Africans have died of the disease since February 2001; approximately 25 to 35 million more will die before the end of the epidemic, experts say.

STUDY: RAP MUSIC MAY BE BAD FOR BLACK GIRLS

(Special to the NNPA)-Rap music has long been the subject of controversy but a recent study suggests that rap videos may make teenage girls behave badly.

African-American teenage girls are more likely to get in trouble with the law, take drugs and contract sexually transmitted diseases, according to a study conducted by researchers at Emory University in Atlanta and the University of Alabama at Birmingham.

"We can see there is some link, some association," said researcher Gina Wingood, an associate professor of behavioral sciences and health education at Emory. "Maybe they see what's on the rap music videos and think that's how teenagers act, and that's how I should act."

Wingood and her colleagues went to health clinics in Birmingham, Ala., and studied 522 Black girls from 1996 to 1999. All were sexually active and between the ages of 14 and 18. Girls who watched the most rap videos (more than the average of 14 hours a week), were three times as likely as the other girls to have hit a teacher (7.1 percent versus 2.4 percent). They were also 2.5 times more likely to have been arrested (17.3 percent versus 7.2 percent), and nearly two times more likely to have had sex with multiple partners (19.3 percent versus 11 percent).

The researchers then followed the girls for a year. Forty-one percent of those who watched the most rap music videos developed a sexually transmitted disease, compared to 33 percent who didn't watch as many videos.

"Young people are listening and observing," says Michael D. Resnick, director of the National Teen Pregnancy Prevention Research Center at the University of Minnesota. "When that environment is one that desensitizes us to violence and to treating each other with caring and respect, we see predictable results in young people and in ourselves."

MAJOR JEWELRY CHAIN CHARGED IN FEDERAL BIAS SUIT

(Special to the NNPA)-Friedman's Jewelers, the nation's third-largest jewelry chain, is being sued in federal court by four former employees who claim the chain used racist policies to deny promotions to Blacks.

The suit claims that, under company policy and a senior manager at Friedman's, they were pressured to hire only a certain number of Black employees and to transfer Black workers to balance the staff's racial mix. They are claiming unspecified damages for lost pay, benefits and emotional distress.

"Friedman's is operating in a Jim Crow world," Thomas A. Warren, a counsel for the plaintiffs told reporters. "The corporate office forces managers to base their hiring, firing, and promotion decisions on the most appalling racial stereotypes."

Jack Steele, a division vice president, alleges he was fired in early 2000 "for reasons related to the allegations in the lawsuit," Denis Shanagher, a lawyer for Friedman's told reporters.

An audiotape recorded by a White plaintiff allegedly contains Steele's voice blaming the condition of a Maryland store on Black people. "We got to get a staff in there and get rid of all those, get rid of half the Black people in there," the voice is heard saying, according to a tape made by plaintiff Rondall Mitchell.

Headquartered in Savannah, Ga., Friedman's has more than 600 stores in 22 states and employs about 4,000 people.

\$2mil needed to save Douglass Home

Washington, DC - The home of famous 19th-century African-American abolitionist and orator Frederick Douglass is threatened by nearly \$2 million of unmet preservation needs, according to a new report by the National Parks Conservation Association (NPCA).

Congress has an opportunity here to preserve the home of Frederick Douglass, a man born into slavery in Maryland who escaped to freedom and helped change the nation, said NPCA President Thomas Kiernan. But urgent funding needs are putting the Douglass home which stands as a reminder of the human yearning for freedom at great risk. When we let historic sites like the Douglass house decay, we turn our backs to the very roots of our nation.

According to NPCAs new State of the Parks report, the historic 1850s home in Washington, D.C., is in need of immediate repair. The National Park Service lacks critical funding and staff to meet day-to-day needs and to protect Mr. Douglass' personal belongings and the integrity of the property.

For example, light has damaged several 19th-century photographs and Mr. Douglass' treasured library collection has been removed from the home to



The home of Frederick Douglass, African-American abolitionist and orator, dates back to the 1850s

prevent additional threats from ongoing moisture problems. Now, the shelves in the study sit empty and brown water stains color the ceilings and walls because funding is not immediately available for restoration.

Despite these needs, funding for the Frederick Douglass National Historic Site has essentially remained flat for several years at a mere \$429,000 in fiscal year 2002. In 2001, NPCA named the park site to its annual list of Americas Ten Most Endangered National Parks because of dire funding needs.

Frederick Douglass lived in his Washington, D.C., home from 1877 until his death in 1895. Born into slavery in Maryland, Douglass became a

leading voice in the anti-slavery movement as well as a famous writer, publisher, orator, statesman, and an advocate for women's rights. The National Park Service has cared for the Douglass home since 1962.

NPCA launched the landmark State of the Parks program in 2000 to assess the condition of natural and cultural resources in national parks across the country. The product of a year long analysis, The Frederick Douglass National Historic Site: A Resource Assessment, is the fifth NPCA State of the Parks report. The full report and additional information about NPCA's State of the Parks program are available at www.npca.org/stateofthepark.

A message from Prudential Financial to individuals who purchased life insurance from The Prudential Insurance Company of America prior to 1951, and who are members of a minority or ethnic group.

At Prudential Financial, we're committed to doing right by our customers. That's why we've undertaken an exhaustive search of our records to find individuals who may have been overcharged by The Prudential Insurance Company of America for life insurance policies purchased before 1951.

Prior to 1951, The Prudential Insurance Company of America charged certain individuals more for life insurance based on their ethnic background or race. That practice was stopped in 1950. Today, Prudential Financial is firmly committed to make whole any customer affected by these practices.

If you have a policy issued by The Prudential Insurance Company of America prior to January 1, 1951, and you are a member of a minority group or certain ethnic group, we invite you to learn whether you may be eligible for a refund of extra premiums paid.

To find out if you are eligible for a refund, please call 800-778-3282 or write us at Prudential Financial, P.O. Box 44240, Jacksonville, FL 32231-4240. If you write us, please include the following information: your policy number, Social Security number, your race or ethnic background, your full name, a phone number and address so that we can reach you.

Editorial

Sharing the blame

We applaud The Prudential Foundation, the Association for Children of New Jersey and the United Way of Essex and West Hudson for their recent conference entitled "Protecting our Children—A Call to Action." It is unfortunate however, that such a conference had to be called as a result of the horrific death of a 7-year-old child. What is more important as a lesson in this tragedy is that we are all to blame. No time in the history of black folk in this country have black children been victimized by their own community. Some may take offense at this statement but it is true nonetheless.

As we go about "making it," our children have been left to fend for them, left in front of cable TV watching who knows what or with a Sony Play Station learning how to steal cars. We let them listen to rap all day with earphones permanently attached or in a trance watching BET or MTV.

Some of us think our children are safe because we try to hide them in private schools with the "right kind of people" only to find that their morals and social skills are no better than the public school children we try to escape and in many instances, worst.

Many of us should remember a time when our people struggled to get an education. Many of us remember a time when everyone in the neighborhood was rooting to see the children achieve and prosper. Parents could do no more than talk about getting your homework done and looking at your grades but they knew it when their children were engaged in learning and achieving. They knew it when their children acted respectfully toward them and others particularly authority figures which included just about every adult in their lives. They knew it when their children went on to accomplish more than they had and lent their efforts to making progress for our community as a whole.

Nationally, Marian Wright Edelman is calling for a National Call-In Day on March 19 to call our senators and representatives concerning legislation that impact heavily on funding education for our children. Particular issues can be found on www.cdfactioncouncil.org. In addition, let's individually pledge to assess what is happening in the live of our children, grandchildren, nieces, nephews, and cousins to see how we can direct them toward a positive lifestyle dedicated to raising the bar of collective achievement in our community.

Rosa Parks boycotts, but barbershop big loser anyway

by Lloyd Williams

I can understand why Rosa Parks decided to boycott the NAACP's 34th Annual Image Awards, after all, the evening's host was none other than Cedric the Entertainer, the actor who had dissed her and other important civil rights figures, including Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. and the Rev. Jesse Jackson, in the controversial comedy *Barbershop*.

"Rosa Parks didn't do nothing but sit her black ass down," Cedric's character, Eddie, announces in the film. He went on to call Dr. King a whore and to exclaim "[Expletive] Jesse Jackson." So, Ms. Parks might have felt like a phony attending the affair, with *Barbershop* being up for five awards while *The Rosa Parks Story*, the made-for-TV movie based on her life, was only nominated twice.

Nonetheless, I suppose Parks got the last laugh in the end, as both her moving biopic and Angela Bassett, the esteemed actress who plays her, won Image Awards, while *Barbershop* went

home empty-handed. But this still leaves unaddressed the obvious question of what the hell is it with the NAACP giving a movie like *Barbershop* more nominations than any other entries? Especially, when there were many more-deserving offerings to choose from, including *Antwone Fisher*, *Brown Sugar*, *As an Act of Protest*, *Drumline* and *Paid in Full* to name a few.

If, as the word "image" implies, the purpose is to reward African-American artists for presenting black people in the best possible light, shouldn't the NAACP do a better job of assessing content and message in the nomination process? This *Barbershop* faux pas is tantamount to the Jewish Anti-Defamation League (ADL) honoring actors for appearing in an offensive film which, say, suggested that the Holocaust was a hoax. I seriously doubt that the ADL would condone such an allegation, even if made in a comedy.

And do you remember how the Sons of Italy and numerous other Italian-American organizations suc-

cessfully blocked the participation of a couple of Italian actors. Dominic Chianese and Lorraine Bracco, from participating in the Columbus Day parade, asserting that, "our children are still facing the same types of defamation due to the constant negativity displayed through programming such as the Sopranos. To include the cast members from this show in the Columbus Day Parade, which celebrates all the positive things Italians and Italian-Americans have brought to this great nation, is insulting to all Italian Americans and reflects poor judgment."

By analogy, while I'm not saying that *Barbershop* should have been banned, or even boycotted, I am simply indicating that the NAACP, as the self-appointed watchdog of the African-American image, exercised some very poor judgment regarding *Barbershop*. What's next, Trent Lott as NAACP's Man of the Year?

Attorney Lloyd Williams is a member of the US Supreme Court, NJ, NY, CT, PA

A sharp defence of credible presidential candidates

By Ron Walters

Let me say up front that, contrary to recent reports in some major newspapers, I am not signing on as an adviser to Al Sharpton's campaign for the Democratic nomination for president of the United States. This represents no rejection of Sharpton; rather it is a rejection of the exhausting process involved in a presidential campaign, after having served in both of Jesse Jackson's bids for the presidency. Thus, if I defend certain aspects of Sharpton's campaign, it should be clear that I am being paid by it.

So, while I am talking about Sharpton's "defense," let me say that I do have a sense of de ja vu, hearing commentator after commentator question whether Sharpton has the credibility to become president of the United States—when we have a George Bush in the White House! In 1984, when Jackson ran, Ronald Reagan was president. He had spent most of his career as an actor and being managed by a small political clique of advisers while he was governor of California. Even then, it was laughable to me that these same commentators questioned whether Jackson had the knowledge and experience to be president.

Well, much of this questioning is just racist, in that either they doubt Black intellectual capacity or do not want to see America symbolically represented by Blacks, especially a liberal Black preacher. The issue of credentials is a sham, first because there are many people who have run for the highest-elected office who had no previous electoral experience, and their credibility was not questioned. For example, Ross Perot and Malcolm Forbes had money, but no political experience. Yet they were viewed as credible presidential candidates. Second, there have been plenty of people who have won election to both houses of congress who had no previous political experience.

The job of president is not merely comprised of the leadership of one man; the decisions that come from the White

House are most often the collective results of paid staff and unpaid experts, unseen friends and advisers—even relatives, such as fathers or wives. In short, it is the institution of the presidency that shapes the decisions that govern the

*... many people who have run for the highest elected office ... had no previous electoral experience, and their credibility was not questioned... For example
Ross Perot and
Malcolm Forbes...*

country. The president must have the courage and judgment to manage the institution, but then, who doubts that either Jackson, Sharpton or Carol Moseley-Braun could do that, since they have done the things to reach the plateau of consideration. That is why we have most often had such mediocre presidents and why many of the sharpest people in the Black community could have done much better in the job.

Colin Powell has been on many people's list for president of the United States, but not only because he has the credentials, mostly because he thinks like those in power and he is their collaborator, even their servant. In fact, he gives enormous cover to many Whites who put Powell in the class of Supreme Court Justice Clarence Thomas: they can't be racist because they support at least one Black person for high office. So, a lot of what passes for credibility is how a Black person running for the highest office in the land thinks.

That puts into some context the problem that I sense. All of this talk about the baggage from the past carried by Sharpton, and to some extent, Carol Moseley-Braun, has nothing to do with their credibility; it is a convenient way to cover up their message. The power of the message they have is anti-war, it is pro-affirmative action, it is that racism is

still alive, it is that America is not doing enough to fund programs for its children, it is that tax cuts drain the national treasury so that funds cannot go to schools and urban programs to help the poor and to stimulate development. These messages have fallen out of favor ever since Jackson ran for president and put them on the national stage. Some shudder that they will come back.

I have just finished reading "Al on America," and although many of his issues and policy recommendations lack the substance they should have, it is clear that he intends to present these out-of-favor issues to the country and even to the Democratic Party. The biggest issue for him, however—and the key to the others—is the direction of the Democratic Party. So, many both inside and outside the Democratic Party want to use Tawana Brawley, Howard Beach, on-and-on ad nauseum, to cover up a potential debate over the direction of the country.

One of the lessons I learned in the Jackson campaigns was the great benefit of being able to deliver an unfiltered message directly to the American people. The Black community—and others similarly situated—needs to have a national voice to deliver substantive messages to the American people about the condition of our communities, schools, jobs and other aspects of the quality of life.

For many of us, Sharpton and Carol Moseley-Braun are not perfect candidates. But the dirty little secret is that none of them are. Most people in America have to settle for someone they don't really want, but who delivers their message close to the way they want it delivered. In that respect, we Blacks should have the maturity and political savvy to get beyond our concern with Sharpton's hairdo and the majority media's concern with Tawana Brawley, or Carol Moseley-Braun's dalliance with a corrupt Nigerian dictator, and get to the issue of how useful their campaigns can be to the Black agenda. That really is the only issue.

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NJBIA blasts healthcare bill at Assembly Health Committee hearing

Employers should not be forced to pay for unlimited healthcare coverage for such dubious behavioral problems as "fetishism," "malingering," caffeine addiction and "identity problems," NJBIA told the Assembly Health and Human Services Committee today.

The bill, A2487 (Weinberg), would require unlimited health insurance coverage for an expanded list of behavioral problems in addition to the current "biologically-based mental or nervous conditions" that are covered now. The bill would expand coverage to nearly 400 "behavioral disorders" by forcing health insurance plans to cover anything listed in the Diagnostic and Statistical Manual of Mental Disorders.

Kelly Stewart Maer, NJBIA assistant vice president for Health Affairs, said this mandate would devastate employers who are already experiencing double digit increases in the cost of providing health benefits for their employees.

"Employers and employees alike should be outraged by this measure," Maer said. "Forcing employers to pay for treatments for such things as fetishes, caffeine addiction or sibling relational problems will have a huge impact on employers. Employees will be forced to pay higher co-payments and higher deductibles and could even lose their healthcare coverage altogether."

"Employers are experiencing runaway health insurance inflation as well as struggling to survive in a weak economy," Maer pointed out. "To add this massive list of healthcare cov-

erage mandates to a system that is already stretched to the limit makes no sense."

"We should be looking for ways to control the costs of healthcare and rein in the

impact of these legislative healthcare mandates, not adding to the problem," Maer said. "NJBIA supports the creation of a healthcare mandates advisory commission to control

the number and the costs of healthcare mandates. Studies show that these mandates can account for up to 20 percent of the cost of health insurance."

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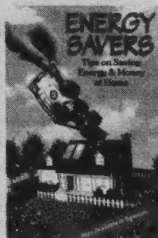
Truancy Bill

Continued from page 1

force would shed light on ways to curb habitual nonattendance."

The task force would consist of 17 members including the Commissioner of Education and representatives of the following organizations: Juvenile Justice Commission a representative of the Administrative Office of the Courts; a representative of the Division of Youth and Family Services; and a representative of the Division of Criminal Justice; eight members of the public, including representative of the NJ School Boards Association, the NJ Association of School Administrators, the NJ Principals and Supervisors Association, the NJ Education Association, the NJ State Federation of Teachers, the Statewide Parent Advocacy Network, the NJ Fraternal Order of Police, and the NJ Policeman's Benevolent Association. The Senate President and the Assembly Speaker would each appoint two members to the panel.

The Assembly Education Committee released the measure 7-0. It now heads to the Assembly Speaker, who decides if and when to post it for a floor vote.



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HIV Treatment: What You Need To Know

By Sandra Tisdale

It's a sad reality that rates of HIV infection continue to explode in the African-American community. Black men and women both have much higher rates of infection than most other ethnic groups in the United States.

Many African-Americans are skeptical about the medical establishment. Years of experimentation on unknowing Blacks in the past has left many people concerned that doctors do not have their best interests at heart. While this fear and suspicion is understandable, it can work against a person infected with HIV. Only a small percentage of HIV-positive people can stay healthy throughout their lives without medications.

While there currently is no cure for HIV, there are medications that can help people live longer, healthier lives. Many Blacks report that they don't bother to be tested for HIV or be treated after diagnosis "because there is no real treatment." While that was true 20 years ago, it's not true anymore.

Others believe that if they

don't have insurance or money, they won't be able to get treated, anyway. But there are special programs available that help people get treatment, regardless of income.

Because treatment can be complicated, it is important to find a physician or primary health care provider who is a specialist in HIV. Just as important is to find someone the patient can trust.

So, once someone is diagnosed, what's next?

Here are measurers that have proven to be useful:

Finding a doctor. A good place for recommendations is the local ASO (AIDS service organization). They often are found under "HIV" or "AIDS" in the white or yellow page telephone directory.

Going to the clinic. Right after diagnosis, it's good to have a physical check-up. Even if someone isn't ready for HIV medications, it's important to find out how much impact the virus is having on his or her health, and if there are any other conditions—such as hepatitis C—that also need to be addressed.

Becoming informed. It's important for HIV-positive people to take an active role in their treatment. Brochures, videos and other forms of information are usually available through HIV clinics, ASOs, health departments and other outlets.

There are too many great newsletters and websites out there to list. Special help is available for people of any ethnic background, gender or sexual orientation. No idea where to start looking? Contact the free CDC AIDS Hotline 24 hours a day at (800) 342-AIDS or visit www.blackAIDS.org on line.

Understanding the goal of HIV treatment. The current goals are to help boost the immune system (by increasing CD4 cells) and reduce the amount of virus in the blood and body (decreasing the viral load). Remember, the ideal is a high CD4 count and a low viral load. This helps reduce the likelihood of illness and improve the quality of life.

Understanding when it's time to start medications. The HIV specialist has a set of guidelines to help determine the best time to start medications. But a key factor is being ready. An HIV-positive person should never start taking HIV medications unless he or she is committed to taking them and taking them properly. They can cause themselves more problems down the road (see below).

Learning the lingo. No one takes just one HIV medication. Most people will take combinations of three or more, in order to hit the virus at multiple vulnerable points. This is called HAART—pronounced "heart"—and it stands for Highly Active Anti-Retroviral Treatment. It is also referred to as "cocktail" treatment.

Currently, there are three classes of HIV medications: "nukes" or NRTIs (nucleoside reverse transcriptase inhibitors); "non-nukes" or NNRTIs (non-nucleoside reverse transcriptase inhibitors); and "PIs," (protease inhibitors).

There are several medications in each class. Many are already approved by the Food and Drug Administration, and others are being developed.

Knowing the virus. Viruses are tricky. They can change, or mutate, to try to avoid the effects of medications. (This is one reason we've never cured the common cold.) Once someone starts HIV treatment, it is extremely important to take the medications correctly, or the virus can change so that those particular drugs no longer work. This is called "resistance."

Understanding cross-resistance. If one set of medications stops working, can't someone just start a new set and have them work just as well? Not always.

Drugs within each class are sometimes "cross-resistant." This means that if one medication in a class stops working for a person, other drugs in that same class may not work or may not work as well.

Avoiding drug resistance. When people start a drug combination, they usually see their CD4 count go up and/or their viral load go down. If their virus starts becoming resistant, their CD4 count can go down and their viral load go up. They may get tired easily or may get new infections.

The best way to fight drug resistance is to take all the prescribed medications correctly, at the right time, every single dose, every single day. This is called "adherence."

Getting serious about adherence. Adherence matters in HIV. Most people have skipped doses of medications their whole lives. If people skip an antibiotic or a high blood pressure pill, it probably doesn't do any real damage.

But HIV is different. Skipping more than a couple of doses a month can let the virus mutate and become resistant. Studies have shown that the best results come from staying as close to perfect as possible.

Different drugs have different schedules. Currently, most medications have to be taken twice a day. Some must be taken three times a day, and a few only once a day.

Learning new tricks. Because adherence is so important, people generally have to learn new ways to remind themselves to take their medications. Some helpful techniques are alarm watches, pill boxes, reminder calls from friends or family.

Understanding sequencing. Sequencing is a technique used to help people get the maximum benefit from their HIV medications. Even if someone is 100 percent adherent, chances are the virus will mutate some day and they will have to switch to a new combination. Most people on HIV treatment in the United States are on their second combination or beyond.

In sequencing, the doctor plans ahead to decide likely choices for the first combination, the second one, the third, and so on, to minimize the chances for cross-resistance. This makes it possible to plan ahead for years.

Taking charge. For many people with HIV, diagnosis makes them take a hard look at other problems, such as substance abuse, mental illness or relationships. Many HIV clinics and ASOs offer counseling and other forms of help for life issues.

A former Surgeon General once said, "Drugs don't work if people don't take them." For people with HIV, and particularly for those in the African-American community, it's a message to remember.

Testing 1-2-3: Types of HIV Tests

In a hurry? Can't stand needles or hate going into the clinic? Today, a variety of HIV tests can determine whether you have HIV positive.

A few of the most common are described below. For more information, or to locate a site offering testing and counseling to help explain how the test works and what the results mean, call the CDC Hotline at 1-800-342-AIDS or check out www.hivtest.org.

Rapid test. Forget those weeks of waiting. This newest test, approved late last year by the Food and Drug Administration, can find out fast if you have HIV—you give a blood sample, and in as little as half an hour, you get the results. If the test comes back positive, they'll do another confirmatory test that takes 24-72 hours.

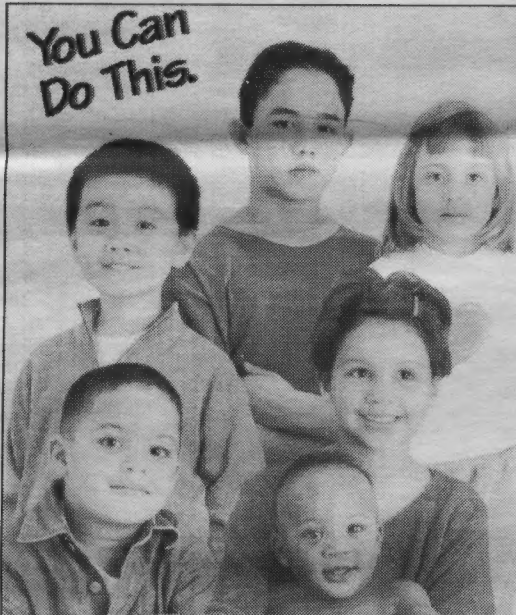
Oral test. This test doesn't require a needle stick or blood test—you place a small pad between your cheek and your gum, which is then analyzed for HIV antibodies. You can learn your HIV status in as little as 24 hours. As with the rapid test, you may need to wait for as many as three days to confirm a positive result.

Serum (blood) test. This most common HIV test, and often it is available for free. It requires that a small amount of blood be drawn. Then return to collect the result one to two weeks later.

Home test. While many are offered over the Internet, only one brand—The Home Access test, also available in drugstores—is approved by the FDA. The test involves pricking your finger and placing drops of blood on a card you mail into a laboratory. You get an ID number to use when phoning for results, and you can speak to a counselor at any point before, during or after the process.

Urine test. This test is slightly less accurate than a serum or oral test, so a positive result often has to be confirmed with a separate blood test. Don't worry that your employer may test for HIV as part of routine drug screening. By law, only physicians in public health clinics, hospitals and private medical practices can use this test.

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Protecting Our Children — A Call to Action



Prudential Foundation hosted Marian Wright Edelman, founder and president of the Children's Defense Fund, at Metropolitan Baptist Church in Newark as keynote speaker for a conference on protecting our children. The forum grew from the "concern over the sense of powerlessness that many felt after the recent death of 7-year-old Faheem Williams. A key objective is to encourage the community at large to find a role to play in providing children with a positive environment where they can grow healthy and strong," commented Gabriella Morris, president of The Prudential Foundation. The conference was organized to discuss what individuals and institutions can do to advance the health and safety of children in New Jersey's communities. Featured sponsors and participants at the conference from left to right were: Gwendolyn Harris, Commissioner of the NJ Department of Human Services, Marian Wright Edelman, President and Founder of The Children's Defense Fund, Gabriella Morris, President of The Prudential Foundation, Marian Bolden, Newark Public Schools Superintendent, and Maria Vizcarrondo-DeSoto, President & CEO of United Way of Essex and West Hudson.

NJ African-American legacy examined for future reparations

Continued from page 1

and, most importantly, recommend how we can help residents overcome and achieve their dreams of living prosperous lives in a land committed to true social justice."

The commission will consist of 27 members, including the Secretary of State and 22 public members appointed by the Governor. In addition, the Senate co-Presidents would each appoint a Senator. The Assembly Speaker and Assembly Majority Leader also would each appoint a legislator to the commission.

The bill provides that the commission members would be comprised of leaders in African-American organizations or communities, or have training or a verifiable interest in the history of slavery in America, New Jersey history and political science, African-American history, African-Caribbean history, labor

history, penal history and law enforcement, economics, education, health, housing, human services, law, psychology, religion or sociology.

Some of the commission's duties would include:

- * Examine the institution of slavery and its legacies in the colony and the State between 1625 and the present;

- * Examine the extent to which State laws that discriminated against freed African slaves, their decedents and other African-Americans residing in New Jersey;

- * Examine the effects of the institution and legacies of slavery on African-Americans and their communities in New Jersey;

- * Quantify the debt owed by the State, local governments and State-created and supported entities to African-Americans residing in New Jersey for wages, benefits, interest and compensation for the de jure and de facto support and protection of the institution of slavery and its legacies;

- * Recommend specific remedies to be offered to African-Americans residing in New Jersey and their communities for violations of the human and civil rights of African-Americans during two centuries of slavery, and the continuing suffering and harm caused by segregation, discrimination and other social, economic and political effects of slavery and its legacies;

- * Determine eligibility requirements for individuals and communities to be offered such remedies;

- * Research methods and materials for facilitating education, community dialogue, symbolic acknowledgment and other formal actions leading to reconciliation and a sense of justice among the people of this State;

- * Make recommendations for local, county and Statewide actions to follow up the commission's recommendations;

- * Estimate the intended benefits and costs of the commission's recommendations;

- * Consider such other matters relating to the institution and legacies of slavery in New Jersey as the members of the commission may deem appropriate.

"New Jersey's ongoing battle to end racial profiling and the obvious segregation of our educational institutions underscore the need to delve deeper and pinpoint the barriers that are keeping people from attaining their dreams," said Stanley, who is also vice chairman of the Assembly Education Committee.

The Assembly Education Committee approved the measure 4-0, and it now heads to the Assembly Speaker who may post it for a floor vote.

Search for AIDS vaccine bypassing African-Americans

against HIV, and a major step was helping his peers overcome their distrust of health care providers.

"I have always known that when a Black man walks into the room there's a difference in the treatment that he will get, even from a health care provider that is African-American," said Wakefield. "At the same time, I grew up in a family where we were taught that no matter who said differently, we were not 'less than.' My work as a health care advocate, and as an educator, has been to try to ensure that others felt that same sense of worth."

Allowing suspicion of researchers to keep African-Americans away from vaccine trials may mean waiting longer to reap the benefits, said Wakefield. Few African-Americans were involved in the early clinical trials of today's HIV treatments, he pointed out, and information about these treatments was slow to reach Black communities. Partly as a result, African-Americans with HIV are less likely than Whites to receive new medications that can delay the onset of AIDS and extend life.

"My fear is that African-Americans will get information about HIV vaccines much later [than other groups] if they don't participate in the clinical trials," he said.

Another argument for African-American involvement in clinical trials is the possibility that vaccine effectiveness may vary between racial groups. Although scientists are not sure how important racial differences will be, Miller feels strongly

that this is a danger to be avoided: "It scares the hell out of me."

Wakefield agrees that it is important to account for any possible racial differences during clinical trials. "If there is a difference, and if Blacks don't participate in the initial clinical trials, we'll discover these differences when it's too late," he said.

Underscoring these concerns is the terrible toll of the AIDS epidemic in African-American communities. While African-Americans make up 12 percent of the U.S. population, the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) report that African-Americans account for more than half of the country's HIV infections each year. Black women account for 63 percent of infections among women overall, and AIDS is one of the leading causes of death for young African-Americans.

HIV prevention efforts and new treatments are likely helping to lessen the impact of AIDS in African-American communities, but most experts agree that an effective vaccine provides the best hope of ending the epidemic.

The search for a vaccine has made measured progress in the past decade, including the first large-scale clinical trial of a potential vaccine among humans. The study involved more than 5,000 volunteers in North America and the Netherlands, with results expected in early 2003.

Yet African-Americans accounted for only six percent of participants in that trial.

"We need expanded efforts

to reach African-Americans with information and opportunities for involvement," said Chris Collins, executive director of the AIDS Vaccine Advocacy Coalition (AVAC), which works to involve communities in the search for a vaccine.

Part of that process is helping build African-Americans' trust of the medical community, Wakefield said.

"We've come a long way since Tuskegee in terms of the protections that are there for participants in clinical trials," he said. Like Collins and Miller, Wakefield stressed the need to educate communities about safeguards that protect volunteers in today's medical research.

Before vaccines can be tested in humans, they must undergo years of laboratory testing to make sure they are safe. Hospitals and research centers have scientific review boards to oversee all medical research and make sure it is ethical and safe. Community advisory boards, made up of volunteers from communities affected by AIDS, can advise researchers on their communities' needs and concerns.

To help overcome "the Tuskegee mentality" in his own organization in Baltimore, Miller has partnered with other local researchers to address people's concerns and to discuss the common stories of medical mistreatment.

Miller feels that this type of partnership is critical in order to increase the participation of African-Americans in vaccine research. He also pointed out that partnerships should begin

well before clinical trials are initiated, so that communities are prepared to take an active role.

Wakefield agrees that outreach to African-American communities is essential, and argued that these efforts should be led by sponsors of clinical trials, including pharmaceutical companies and the federal government.

"It is the responsibility of the sponsors of clinical trials to make sure that people who can participate have every opportunity to do so," he said.

Wakefield also argued that African-American community organizations have an important role to play in educating their communities about HIV vaccines and clinical trials.

As for individuals, Chris Collins of AVAC said that African-Americans should consider serving as advocates for their communities, by joining community advisory boards or speaking out about vaccines in public.

AIDS experts also say that individuals can contribute by supporting existing HIV prevention efforts.

"HIV prevention has saved countless lives, and is still the best way to reduce the toll of the epidemic," said Dr. Harold Jaffe, of the CDC. "Until we have an effective vaccine, support for prevention efforts in African-American communities remains critical."

When asked about what can be done to promote awareness of vaccine research, Dr. Miller was clear: "Everyone who talks about HIV prevention needs to talk about vaccines."

Activists want to turn off negative lyrics

By Herb Boyd

Special to the NNPA from the Amsterdam News

NEW YORK (NNPA)— Seeking to minimize the increasingly destructive impact of certain rap music, a coalition of concerned activists is asking people to turn off their radios until the stations open their playlists to more conscious and uplifting music.

"There is a preponderance of negative and destructive ideas on the radio stations here in New York City and around the nation," said Bob Law, chair of the National Leadership Alliance, at a recent press conference at Abyssinian Baptist Church. "The music they select to play is anti-woman, anti-Black, and therefore, anti-life. So, we are asking listeners to turn off their radios every Thursday."

Law, a well-known activist who has led a number of progressive actions, said the play lists at too many of the local stations are geared to "romanticizing the thug life."

"We are not trying to censor the stations and what they play," he said. "What we would like to see is a more balanced list that would include conscious rap music."

Rev. Calvin Butts III, the church's pastor, added, "If there's any censorship, it's being done by the radio stations. They have a First Amendment right to play what they want. While we'd prefer they not play any of this offensive music, they could balance things with more music with lyrics that elevate our women and children."

Readers may remember Butts' campaign several years ago to destroy records with negative messages by steam-rolling them in the street.

Brenda Watts, an assistant principal and a member of the New York Association of Black Educators, said the children she encountered were imitating and absorbing all the negative information from the current selections on local radio stations.

"They are not receiving any nurturing music," she said. "Many of our children can't write a decent sentence. What we need is music that is more liberating."

For Law and his colleagues, liberating music would be consistent with the ideas promoted by Stevie Wonder, Marvin Gaye, the Ojays, Curtis Mayfield and others in the past. Prof. Leonard Jeffries, a politi-

cal and social scientist, and Minister Kevin Muhammad, of the Nation of Islam, were among those in attendance and in support of the drive to eliminate filthy music.

"Our contention is not that progressive music is not being produced," Law said. "It is, but the stations are refusing to play it."

He said the stations rarely play such current artists as Common, Dead Prez, Talib Kweli, KRS1 and Nas.

"I think it's a deliberate policy on part of the program directors at these stations to suppress conscious rap. Even some of the older performers with established reputations can't get any airplay."

Al Goodman, of the group Ray Goodman & Brown, said, "We get some play of our older recordings on various Quiet Storm stations but no one plays our current release. They say we're too old. Are the Rolling Stones and Cher too old?"

Almitra, an independent music producer, said, "An example of music with conscious lyrics is 'The Colored Section,' by Donnic. They can't say that conscious rap music is not being produced, because it is. They are just not playing it."

Some listeners have their doubts about the radio campaign.

"I don't know how effective it's going to be to ask people to turn off their radios, and even if they do, there's no way to measure the impact of this demand," said Aisha Salaam, attending the morning conference with her mother, Sharonne Salaam. "There are other stations that play more conscious music, more conscious rap, and maybe that's an option."

According to Law and Butts, this is just the first phase of their campaign to halt the spread and proliferation of negative music.

"And already we're getting feedback from some of the stations that have included more conscious music at their stations," Law said. "We hope to make this a nationwide initiative."

Butts added, "The main thing is to get the stations to pay attention to our message. But, more than anything, we want the people to get the message."

Members of the National Leadership Alliance are hoping that advertisers will also get the message and not support stations with an unbalanced play list.

Law concluded, "If not, we may have to selectively choose a few of them to boycott."

E Briefs

Check this out !

—Kim Bowman

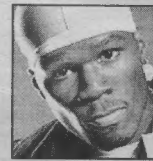


Ross ticketed for driving unregistered car



Police gave diva Diana Ross, 58, a \$78 ticket Sunday in Greenwich, Conn., because the black Ford Taurus she was driving had an expired registration tag, according to the Associated Press. This latest vehicle incident comes after her Dec. 30 arrest for drunken driving in Tucson, Ariz. Ross didn't appear for her January arraignment in Arizona. Instead, her legal team filed a "notice of appearance" claim and pleaded innocent on her behalf on all three charges. Ross is due in court Wednesday in Tucson to stand trial for the DUI charges. Let's hope she doesn't drive herself.

50 Cent buys son bullet proof vest



Reports say that rapper 50 Cent, who often wears a bullet-proof vest, has purchased a tyke-sized vest for his 6-year-old son to wear while on tour with him. (It's rather sad that those are even made — nonetheless).

Bernie Mac's producer is let go

Fox has fired Bernie Mac creator and executive producer Larry Wilmore over what appears to be creative differences. Variety reports. Numerous industry sources told the trade magazine that series star Bernie Mac was asked about the decision to move on without Wilmore and did not put up any opposition, which was likely the key to Fox's final decision. Wilmore, who has won both an Emmy and a Peabody for his work on the show, is now in final negotiations to sign an overall deal with NBC.

Big spending celebs...



The fashion maven, rapper L'il Kim has boasted of spending "between 20 and 30 a month" (that's thousands, natch) at fashion houses Fendi and Dior. Kim's new album La Bella Mafia is out in stores.

As for P. Diddy he spent \$75,000 on invites to his Feb. 8 Fashion Week bash, favors \$150 Cristal bubbly and wears a watch worth nearly \$1 million. Clearly he values a good time.



Fuqua accused of threatening former girlfriend



Director Antoine Fuqua has been accused in a lawsuit of threatening the life of an ex-girlfriend and making false charges to authorities to hide their affair from his wife, actress Lela Rochon, the Los Angeles Times reports. According to the suit, Tanya Evans ended the affair in March 2002 as Fuqua began shooting *Tears of the Sun* in Hawaii. Two months later,

Fuqua had Evans arrested for stalking, but most of the charges against her were dropped for lack of evidence. In November, Evans stood trial on one count of making harassing phone calls, but was acquitted.

Aguilera Fit for Versace



Raunchy pop singer Christina Aguilera is set to become the new face of Italian label Versace. Donatella Versace told Reuters her new outfits were inspired by Aguilera's singing and dancing. (Versace said exactly the same of Britney Spears, who was guest of honor at the spring/summer collection show) "I watch the videos of Christina and I always die," Versace said. Aguilera has moved into Spears' front-row seat at Versace.

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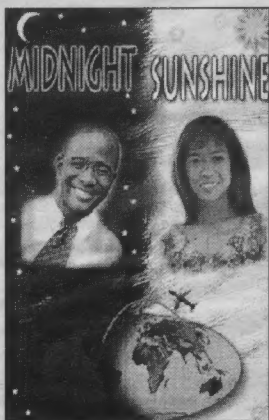
**Midnight Sunshine/ By Kelvin L. Reed/
Peralta Publishing Company
\$13.95/ ISBN 096676315-7**

Novel shatters myths of mail order brides

Bellingham, MA — African American author Kelvin L. Reed freely admits that his latest novel, *Midnight Sunshine*, about the romantic relationship between an African American male and Asian female who met as pen pals, is a positive story about the so-called mail-order bride experience. After all, his Asian-born wife and he have been happily married for eight years.

"Best decision I've ever made in my life," the 45-year-old writer declares with a smile. "Before I wrote the book I'd heard stories about exploitation, racism, fraud, abuse, etc. but my wife and I were happy, and we knew other couples like us who were happy. I wanted to offer an alternative, for men who haven't been successful at finding their soul mates."

Set in Boston, *Midnight Sunshine* follows a fictional engaged couple as they struggle to become acquainted before the 90-day limit on the woman's visa expires. The book isn't critical of Black women. Reed explains; it simply explores the lengths to which some people will go to find love, even if it means searching outside of their own



racial or cultural group.

"Searching halfway across the world isn't for everybody, but it worked for me," Reed insists.

Reminded of newspaper and magazines articles reporting a Black male shortage for Black females seeking husbands, Reed was asked if he recommended that other men, including Black men, search for a mate through overseas introductions to Asian women. "Absolutely," Reed quickly replies, "Nothing wrong with keeping your options open."

For more information about *Midnight Sunshine*, go to www.peraltapub.com.

Agent Cody Banks

Movie review by Kam Williams

Another Kid-Turned-Spy Adventure Tailored to the Tots

Due to the surprising box-office success of *Spy Kids I* and *II*, the arrival of a blatant knockoff like *Agent Cody Banks* comes as no surprise. While the movie is by no means original, it is at least engaging enough to entertain the under-8 set. But any adult unlucky enough to have to accompany the tots to the theater is likely to find the experience sheer torture.

Trust me, you've seen every bit of this movie before, an amalgam of lifted ideas, starting with the appropriation of 007's signature phrase. Yes, of course, the name is Banks, *Cody Banks*. Then there's the stock spy gadgetry, the stock villain with a stock henchman who are up to no good inside a stock industrial island fortress outfitted with stock catwalks and conveyer belts.

There's also the stock fart jokes, the stock death-defying leaps a step ahead of exploding fireballs, and so forth. Even the social zero recruited by the CIA storyline sounds tired.

And the cast has been just as carefully packaged to appeal to the desired demographic. Thus, the title role went to munchkin Frankie Muniz, who the kids know as Malcolm on the Fox-TV series *Malcolm in the Middle*. Although the 5'4"

Muniz is still short enough to portray a precocious pre-pubescent character like *Cody Banks*, let's face it, he's starting to look like a midget.

The problem is that he doesn't match up right opposite his love interest, Natalie, played by Hilary Duff, who the kids know as Lizzie on the Disney-TV series *Lizzie McGuire*. It's hard to buy the idea that a blossoming beauty like Natalie would even notice a squeaky squirt like *Cody*. Be that as it may, the principal cast is rounded out by supermodel-turned-actress Angie Harmon, best known as the wife of washed-up, NFL cornerback Jason Sehorn.

Harmon, as *Cody's* CIA contact Ronica Miles, devotes more screen time to an eye-popping wardrobe of revealing and tight-fitting outfits than to cracking the case.

The case, by the way, involves *Cody's* enrolling at the same elite prep school that Natalie attends. His job is to



seduce the girl in order to spy on her eccentric, genius scientist father who has been duped into developing weapons of mass destruction the bad, bad Brinkman (Ian McShane). If you find yourself offended, like *Cody* was momentarily, by the idea of romancing Natalie to get at her father, don't fret, it's his patriotic duty. Besides, as Ronica explains, "Creepy? This is the CIA. This is what we do."

Besides, who knows? *Cody* might really fall for her in the end, with the two sharing a proverbial kiss before going for that proverbial ride into the proverbial sunset.

Good (2 stars)

Rated PG for mild epithets, cartoonish violence and some sensuality.

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Author Harriette Cole's book release party brings elite to Studio Museum in Harlem

The Studio Museum in Harlem recently hosted a book launch announcing bestselling author Harriette Cole's latest book, *Choosing Truth: Living an Authentic Life* (Simon & Schuster). The event was held as part of the museum's Books and Authors' program and featured a reading, book signing, and cocktail reception.

Over 400 guests attended including notables such as style expert Lloyd Boston, Vanguard Media CEO Keith Clinkscals, Sandra Parks of the *Daily Blossom*, *Inside Edition's* April Woodard and interior designer and *Fine Living* Channel TV host Sheila Bridges.

Choosing Truth is a straight talking book about being honest with people in personal and professional endeavors and being true to oneself. Cole's presentation incorporated excerpts from her journal, personal anecdotes and selections from her book with the mes-



Inside Edition's, April Woodard & Author, Harriette Cole

sage that happiness stems from a life lived with integrity and honesty. Practicing self inquiry, keeping a journal, cultivating a spiritual life, learning to listen, staying in the moment, keeping good company, and being responsible were offered as a prescription for choosing truth. Cole concluded that despite her professional success, she found contentment only when she began to actively live from truth.

Harriette Cole is also the



Vanguard Media CEO, Keith Clinkscals & Harriette Cole

author of *How to Be: A Guide to Contemporary Living*, as well as the bestselling *Jumping the Broom: The African American Wedding Planner* and its companion volume, *Jumping the Broom Wedding Workbook*. As founder of profundities, inc., a style, life coaching and literary production company, she has worked with such clients as Alicia Keys, Mary J. Blige, and Erykah Badu.

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TO: **RONALD DAVID BROWN**
 ADDRESS UNKNOWN

YOU ARE HEREBY notified that a petition for termination of parental rights pending adoption has been filed in the above-styled court on February 24, 2003 under the above case number. There will be a hearing on the petition to terminate parental rights pending adoption on **May 20, 2003 at 9:45 am before Judge George A. Sprinkel IV at Orange County Courthouse, 425 N. Orange Avenue, Orlando, Florida 32801, Courtroom 16-B.** The court has set aside 15 minutes for this hearing. If you executed a consent to adoption or an affidavit of nonpaternity and a waiver of venue, you have the right to request that the hearing on the petition to terminate parental rights be transferred to the county in which you reside. You may object by appearing at the hearing or filing a written objection with the court.

UNDER SECTION 63.089, FLORIDA STATUTES, FAILURE TO FILE A WRITTEN RESPONSE TO THIS NOTICE WITH THE COURT OR TO APPEAR AT THIS HEARING CONSTITUTES GROUNDS UPON WHICH THE COURT SHALL END ANY PARENTAL RIGHTS YOU MAY HAVE REGARDING THE MINOR CHILD.

The birth mother, Shalon Hargrove, believes that you are the birth father of her minor child. You are required to serve a copy of your written defenses, if any, to the petition on the Adoption Entity, A Chosen Child, Inc., 1516 E. Hillcrest St., Suite 200A, Orlando, FL 32803, and file the original with the clerk of the above-styled court on or before **May 20, 2003** otherwise, a judgment may be entered against you for the relief demanded in the petition.

The birth mother resides in Orlando, Orange County, Florida; is 26 years old; African American; 5' 7", 210 lbs; with brown eyes and black hair. The birth mother believes that conception occurred in Newark, NJ.

The alleged birth father's name is Ronald David Brown and he is 26 years old; African American; 6' 2", 235 lbs; with brown eyes and black hair. The whereabouts of the suspected birth father is unknown to the birth mother.

There is one minor child subject to this action who is a male child, born on December 16, 2002, in Orlando, Orange County, Florida. The minor child's legal name is Joshua Hargrove. He has also been known as Baby Boy Hargrove. The minor child has not been known by any other names, is not of American Indian heritage, and does not have a social security number. The minor child is not the subject of any other custody proceeding pending in this state or any other state. The minor child is not subject to existing child support order(s) in this or any state or territory. The minor child is residing with the prospective adoptive parents pursuant to a Report of Intended Placement, dated December 18, 2002, from the child's discharge from the hospital until the present. The names and address of the prospective adoptive parents is confidential and protected by Fla. Stat. 63.162.

The name, address and telephone number of the adoption entity seeking to place the minor for adoption is: A Chosen Child, Inc., 1516 E. Hillcrest St., Suite 200A, Orlando, FL 32803; telephone number (407) 934-1599 or 1-800-339-3821.

The name, address and telephone number of the division of the circuit court in which the petition is filed is: Clerk of Circuit Court, Domestic Relations Division, 425 N. Orange Ave., Rm. 320, Orlando, FL 32801; telephone number (407) 836-2054.

Notice to grandparents under Fla. Stat. 63.0425 is not required because the minor child subject to this proceeding is under the age of six months and has not resided with a grandparent for at least six months.

WITNESS my hand and seal this 5th day of March 2003.

LYDIA GARDNER
 CLERK OF THE CIRCUIT COURT

LISA RAI
 By: **CIRCUIT COURT SEAL**
 Deputy Clerk

(COURT SEAL)

In accordance with the AMERICANS WITH DISABILITIES ACT, if you are a person with a disability who needs any accommodation in order to participate in this proceeding, you are entitled, at no cost to you, to the provision of certain assistance. Please contact the COURT ADMINISTRATION, at 425 North Orange Avenue, Room 2130, Orlando, Florida 32801; telephone (407) 836-2303, within 2 working days of your receipt of this Notice; if you are hearing impaired, call (TDD) 1-800-955-8771; if you are voice impaired, call VOICE (v) 1-800-955-8770.

\$50.40

LEGAL NOTICE REQUEST FOR PROPOSALS FOR FINANCIAL AUDIT

The Housing Authority of the Township of Franklin, in the County of Somerset, State of New Jersey at the Administrative Offices of the Authority, located at No. 1 Parkside Street, Somerset, NJ is soliciting proposals for a financial audit for fiscal year ending September 2003.

The Authority presently administers the following:

Public Housing Management - 100
 Section 8 Certificate and Voucher - 134

Proposals must include submission of cost, detailing a fee structure for all services to be performed and a statement of qualification, which should include experience in auditing of HUD and FMHA programs.

All proposals must be received by 4:00 p.m. on April 30, 2003 at the Housing Authority of the Township of Franklin, 1 Parkside Street, Somerset, NJ 08873.

PROPOSALS WILL NOT BE ACCEPTED AFTER THE ABOVE STATED DATE AND TIME. All interested firms should contact the Authority at the above address or by calling 732-545-9430.

DEWAYNE K. CRUSE
 Executive Director

Fee Accountant: Tom Furlong, CPA, 470 Highway 79, Morganville, NJ 07751 Telephone: 732-591-2300 FAX: 732-591-6969

\$23.62

Effective March 11, 2003 the Boonton Housing Authority will close the waiting list. There will be no more scheduled appointments made after this date. All appointments already scheduled on the books will be honored through May 29, 2003. Anyone who fails to appear on the scheduled appointment date and time, will not be rescheduled.

Boonton Housing Authority
 Sherry L. Sims
 Executive Director

\$7.87

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Advertisement for Bids

The Housing Authority of the City of Long Branch
 Garfield Court Administration Building
 P O Box 337
 Long Branch, NJ 07740

Sealed bids for Unarmed Guard Services at Chester Arthur and Kennedy Towers.

The Long Branch Housing Authority shall receive bids by April 8, 2003, at the Administration Offices of the Housing Authority until 10:00 am. At 10:00 am all bids shall be publicly opened and read aloud. Bids must be submitted prior to the designated time for acceptance and opening of bids and be submitted either by mail or in person by bidder or his agent. No bids shall be accepted after the designated time.

All bids shall be enclosed in a sealed envelope bearing the name of the bidder and clearly marked "Unarmed Guard Services"

The information for bidder, form of bid and specification may be reviewed and obtained at the offices of the Long Branch Housing Authority at any time during the regular business hours of 9:00 am to 4:00 P.M., Monday through Friday starting March 17, 2003. After March 17, 2003 telephone the Long Branch Housing Authority at (732) 222-3747 ext. 138 with any questions.

Each bid must be accompanied by a certification by the bidder regarding equal opportunity employment practice.

The Authority does not obligate itself to accept the lowest bid and reserves the right to waive any information in the bid or to accept or reject any or all bids if deemed in the best interest of the Authority.

Tyrone Garrett
 Executive Director

\$28.35

LEGAL NOTICE

REQUEST FOR PROPOSALS FOR MOD/CAPITAL FUND PROGRAM COORDINATING SERVICES

The Housing Authority of the Town of Morristown, County of Morris, State of New Jersey, is seeking proposals for the services of a qualified individual or firm to provide MOD/CAPITAL FUND PROGRAM COORDINATING SERVICES.

Interested individuals or firms can obtain a copy of the specifications at the administrative offices of the Morristown Housing Authority, 31 Early St., Morristown, NJ 07960 during regular business hours, or they can be mailed by calling 973-538-6343.

Original plus one (1) copy of the proposal must be submitted no later than 3:00 p.m. on March 17, 2003. It is not permissible to fax copies of proposals.

David Gardner
 Executive Director
 Morristown Housing Authority

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JOB OPPORTUNITIES

FAMILY SELF-SUFFICIENCY COORDINATOR -

Public Agency seeks Coordinator to develop and administer programs to assist in the selection and training of public housing subsidy recipients to become self-sufficient. Provide coordination of services and training including vocational training, day-care, transportation, parenting, financial/housing counseling, etc. Must have computer skills. Experience in social work with knowledge in case management and crisis intervention working with low income housing individuals a plus. Excell. Benefits package. Send resume to:

Housing Authority of the City of Passaic
 333 Passaic St., Passaic, NJ 07055-5896
 Attn: Sandra Ortiz

Equal Opportunity Employer

DIRECTOR OF FINANCE -

Public Housing Authority seeks dynamic and experienced Finance Director. Responsible for budgets, financial reports, HUD financial requirements and supervision of 8 person staff. Should have HUD accounting experience, computer literacy, and familiarity with Section 8, Public Housing, and Capital Fund Programs. Authority operates 700 public housing units and 1,400-unit Section 8 Voucher program. Interested applicants must submit cover letter with salary requirements, resume, and professional references to:

Housing Authority of the City of Passaic
 333 Passaic Street, Passaic, NJ 07055
 Attn: Sandra Ortiz

Equal Opportunity Employer

SECURITY COORDINATOR -

Public agency seeks an experienced full-time Security Coordinator. Will plan, direct and manage the public safety operations of the Authority including community liaison activities. Must have a Bachelors Degree in Public Safety or 5 years equivalent work experience. Appointees will be required to possess a valid NJ driver's license and use own vehicle for job related travel. Interested applicants must submit cover letter with salary requirements, resume and professional references to:

Passaic Housing Authority
 333 Passaic St., Passaic, NJ 07055
 Attn: Sandra Ortiz

Equal Opportunity Employer



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Newark Airport Marriott

For more information call or email:

973-642-4400 / SpecialEvents@Citynewsnetwork.com

Calendar

Community

Global Volunteers is looking for volunteers for community project in Ghana, West Africa for three weeks during the summer. For more info call 1800-487-1074 or visit www.globalvolunteers.org.

The deadline for voters registration for the 2003 annual school board election is Monday, March 17. This year's school board election will take place on April 15. Please register if you haven't already.

ONGOING

Roselle — Warinanco Ice Skating Center offers skating sessions on Friday evenings from 6:00 - 8:00 p.m. For more info call 908-298-7850. The center is open until Saturday March 30.

SATURDAY, MARCH 15

Newark — Organization of African-American Administrators presents its 11th Annual Awards Breakfast at 8:30 a.m. at the Newark Airport Marriott. For more info call 973-733-6848 or 973-705-3860.

Newark — People's Organization For Progress will hold a demonstration against the war with Iraq at 12:30 p.m. at the corner of Broad and Market St. For more info call 973-801-0001.

Irvington — Sigma Gamma Rho Sorority, Inc. invites the community to a youth symposium/ talent show at Irvington High School from 2:00 - 5:00 p.m. For more info call 973-297-5812.

MONDAY, MARCH 17

Newark — Essex County College will host its annual Sociology Week lecture series beginning on the 17th about the issues of war, the economy, etc. at 1:00 p.m. in the Mary Burch Theater. For more info call 973-877-3250.

WEDNESDAY, MARCH 19

Trenton — The Department of Education will meet for a public hearing session at the state board office. For more info call 609-292-1126.

TUESDAY, APRIL 29 — MAY 4

Newark — Universoul Circus is coming to Newark on its 10th Anniversary Tour. For more info call ticketmaster at 212-307-7171.

Heartbeat

ONGOING

Belleville — Clara Maass Medical Center will offer complimentary

blood pressure screenings every fourth Monday of the month beginning January 27. For more info call 1-800-CLARA-MAASS.

Kearny — West Hudson Hospital offers women's alcoholic anonymous seminar at 7:30 p.m. For more info call 201-955-7556.

Irvington — Irvington General offers women's HIV/AIDS support group at 10:00 a.m. For more info call 973-275-0210.

Millburn — The Saint Barnabas Hospice and Palliative Care Center offers bereavement support group meetings every 1st and 3rd Thursday from 10:00 a.m. - 11:30 a.m. For more info call 973-379-2200.

Newark — WIC Program at UMDNJ offers a variety of support services to participants. Appointments are strongly recommended. For more info call 973-972-3416.

Newark — Beth Israel Medical Center offers free Breast Cancer Patient Support Group. For more info call 973-926-7609.

Newark — Beth Israel Medical Center offers a bereavement support group every second Monday each month at 6:00 p.m. For more info call 973-926-7278.

SATURDAY, MARCH 15

Newark — The NJ Chapter of the International Black Women's Congress will host a health seminar on black women combating HIV/AIDS and Breast Cancer from 8:00 a.m. - 2:30 p.m. For more info call 973-926-0570.

THURSDAY, MARCH 20

Bloomfield — The Blood Center of NJ will hold a community blood drive from 3:00 - 8:30 p.m. at the Fire House, 375 Franklin St. For more info call 1800-BLOOD-NJ.

THURSDAY, MARCH 27

Newark — The Blood Center of NJ will hold a community blood drive from 10:30 a.m. - 4:00 p.m. at Enforcement Volunteers Patrol, 292 South Avenue. For more info call 1800-BLOOD-NJ.

WEDNESDAYS — APRIL 2

Livingston — St. Barnabas will offer a weight management program at 6:00 p.m. For more info call 973-322-5664.

ONGOING — APRIL 31

Newark — A computer based 12-week GED course covering subject areas: Writing, Reading, Social Studies, Science and Mathematics, with a curriculum which covers life skills, job readi-



SATURDAY, APRIL 26 — Community Theatre in Morristown, NJ presents smooth, diva of soul Roberta Flack. Come and enjoy the soulful sounds of the lady who brought songs such as "Killing Me Softly". For more info call 973-539-8008.

ness and computer instruction, will be offered from Tuesday through Friday, 9:00 a.m. - 4:00 p.m. at La Casa de Don Pedro, 39 Broadway. For more info call 973-481-4713.

Business

ONGOING

Newark — The Women's Center of Essex County College is sponsoring a series of seminars, support groups during Spring 2003 Semester. For more info call 973-877-3395.

Artz

ONGOING

Newark — Maize Restaurant presents Sweet and Low Thursdays featuring vocalist Denise Hamilton from 5:00 p.m. - 10:00 p.m. For more info call 973-639-1200.

SATURDAY, MARCH 15

Jersey City — The North Jersey Chapter of Spelman College Jazz Ensemble will host their 13th Annual Benefit Concert at the Margaret Williams Theatre at NJ City University at 7:00 p.m. For more info call 973-677-9722.

New York — The Studio Museum of Harlem presents Intersections: Arts and Poetry, an evening with poets sharing their pose and ideas presented in works by African-Americans from 1925-1945. For more info call 212-864-4500.

SUNDAY, MARCH 16

Newark — NJPAC presents group duo Sweet Honey in The Rock with Toshi Reagon and Big Lovely at 3:00 p.m. For more info call 1-888-46-5722.

TUESDAY, MARCH 18

Millburn — Paper Mill Theatre presents The Duke Ellington Orchestra at 8:00 p.m. For more info call 973-376-4343.

New York — Lincoln Center presents New Jersey's Poet & essayist Amiri Baraka, playwright Sonia Sanchez, trumpet player/ composer Cecil Bridgewater and professor Robert G. O'Meally at 7:00 p.m. in the Stanley H. Kaplan Penthouse. For more info call 212-721-6500.

THURSDAY, MARCH 20

Newark — The Newark Public Library presents a fashion extravaganza and forum featuring Newark Designers and the work of Douglas Says. For more info call 973-733-3610.

FRIDAY, MARCH 21

Newark — Reggae superstar Buju Banton will perform at Club Eclipse. For more info call 973-923-5869.

SATURDAY, MARCH 22

Newark — The Newark Library presents Women's History Month Breakfast celebrating great women with music and lectures at 10:00 a.m. For more info call 973-733-3610.

ONGOING — MARCH 23

Newark — Newark Museum presents the Newark Teen Arts Festival filled with concerts and events highlighting the visual and performing arts talents of students from the city's public secondary schools. For more info call 973-596-6550.

WEDNESDAY, MARCH 26

Newark — Rutgers University will host a concert featuring contemporary traditional music including jazz, pop, etc. at 12:30 p.m. at the Center

for Law and Justice. For more info call 973-353-5262.

FRIDAY, MARCH 28 & 29

New York — B.B. King Blues Club presents Roberta Flack at 8:00 p.m. For more info call ticketmaster at 212-307-7171.

FRIDAY, APRIL 4

Newark — African Globe Theater premieres the play, "Having Our Say", a memoir of two sisters and their rise to success. Play is all month long. For more info call 973-642-1584.

SUNDAY, APRIL 6

New York — Hip-Hop soul artist Common will perform at the Roseland Ballroom at 6:45 p.m. For more info call ticketmaster at 212-307-7171.

New York — B.B. King Blues Club presents Unity Jam, a salute to Hip-Hop music with performances by Kurtis Blow, Rob Base and other Hip-Hop pioneers at 8:00 p.m. For more info call ticketmaster at 212-307-7171.

WEDNESDAY, APRIL 9

New Brunswick — The State Theatre presents Blues legend B.B. King at 8:00 p.m. For more info call 732-246-7469.

SATURDAY, APRIL 12

New York — African songstress Angelique Kidjo will perform at B.B. King at 8:00 p.m. Kodjo's music reflects jazz, salsa, rumba, souk and makossa. For more info call ticketmaster at 212-307-7171.

Religion

ONGOING

Newark — Greater Service Fellowship Church invites you to Sunday morning service at 9:00 a.m. and Wednesday Bible study at 7:00 p.m. If you have questions, come get the answers. For more info call 973-848-1711.

SATURDAY, APRIL 5

Newark — Bethany Baptist Church, 275 West Market St. presents Bertha Hope and Jazzberry Jam at 6:00 p.m. For more info call 973-623-8161.

Mail your calendar events and photographs at least two weeks in advance to:

**City News Publishing
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